



ANNISE D. PARKER
MAYOR

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF HOUSTON
TEXAS

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Dear Citizens,

During my campaign for mayor, I spoke often about the past failures in our city to treat animals as humanely as possible. This is a critical function necessary to quality of life in Houston. The Animal Campus at Gragg Park offers a unique opportunity to positively impact animal welfare in our community and I wholeheartedly endorse this campaign.

The Animal Campus at Gragg Park project is a \$10-million capital campaign to build a state-of-the-art, 'green' 30,000 square-foot pet adoption facility, a low-cost veterinary clinic and a 3.3-acre dog park on a picturesque 5.5-acre, city-owned tract in Gragg Park along Brays Bayou and Wayside Drive.

Each year, around 25,000 cats and dogs enter BARC (Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care). Many of these pets are healthy or treatable and could easily be adopted. However, BARC's out-of-the-way location and primary role as an animal control facility deter adoptions. As a result, many healthy pets are needlessly euthanized. For years, the City of Houston and the animal welfare community have wanted BARC to have an adoption facility, but the cost was prohibitive. In 2007, Ann Slemons Young left approximately \$1.7 million of her estate for the purpose of building an adoption center for BARC pets. During my tenure on city council, we committed additional funding to the construction of a new comprehensive animal welfare campus to maximize the impact of this gift.

Modeled upon the successful public-private partnership between the City of San Francisco and the privately-operated Maddie's Adoption Center, the Houston animal adoption facility will be owned by the City of Houston and operated by an independent 501c3 nonprofit organization under a long-term lease. The nonprofit organization, led by experts in proactive animal sheltering, will receive healthy and treatable pets from BARC and adopt them out to good homes. The associated low-cost veterinary clinic will provide both spay and neuter and primary veterinary services to the public, helping drive down pet overpopulation in Houston.

I have often mentioned that, if I were elected mayor, I would do everything in my power to ensure that Houston transitions to a no-kill community. The Animal Campus at Gragg Park will allow our city to significantly decrease euthanasia rates and increase adoption rates, an important step in the right direction. I hope all Houstonians will join me in supporting this important project.

Sincerely,

Mayor Annise Parker
City of Houston